

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are pending in the present application.

Claims 13-14 have been added.

Entry of the above amendments is earnestly solicited.

An early and favorable first action on the merits is earnestly requested.

Should there be any matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact OSRAM SYLVANIA at (978) 777-1900.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE."

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachments

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE:

The Abstract of the Disclosure has been amended as follows:

**Abstract of the Disclosure**

**[Circuit apparatus and method for operating a lamp]**

The current through the components of a half-bridge of an electronic ballast is intended to be limited during the starting phase. For this purpose, the gate of a half-bridge transistor (T2) is driven by a current limiting circuit (D1, D2, D3, T3, C3) in such a way that the current through the transistors (T1, T2) is limited during the starting phase, whereas it remains unlimited during the glow phase and burning phase of the lamp (LA).

**[(Figure 3)]**

IN THE CLAIMS:

The claims have been amended as follows:

4. (Amended) The circuit apparatus as claimed in claim 1 [one of claims 1 to 3], in which the lamp can be operated in a load circuit, that is connected to the inverter device.

12. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 9 [one of claims 9 to 11], in which the at least one transistor switching unit is

switched off at a prescribed threshold value as a function of the current flowing through it.

**Abstract of the Disclosure**

The current through the components of a half-bridge of an electronic ballast is intended to be limited during the starting phase. For this purpose, the gate of a half-bridge transistor (T2) is driven by a current limiting circuit (D1, D2, D3, T3, C3) in such a way that the current through the transistors (T1, T2) is limited during the starting phase, whereas it remains unlimited during the glow phase and burning phase of the lamp (LA) .